



EmployeeUPDATE

Our Mission: To serve the people of North Carolina by enabling individuals, families and communities to be healthy and secure, and to achieve social and economic well-being.

A monthly publication for employees of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Two Local Health Directors Receive Public Health Awards

George F. Bond Jr., director of the Buncombe County Health Center, and William J. (Bill) Smith IV, director of the Robeson County Health Department, have been awarded 2006 Ronald H. Levine Legacy Awards for Public Health in recognition of each man's many contributions to public health on the local, state and national levels. Smith and Bond were presented with the awards by State Health Director Leah Devlin at the 2006 State Health Directors Conference in Raleigh on Jan. 27.

Named for former North Carolina State Health Director Dr. Ron Levine, the annual award honors individuals whose life work on behalf of the public's health has resulted in significant, sustainable and positive improvements in North Carolina's public health system.

Bond began his public health career in 1971 at the Durham County Health Department. He became director of the Henderson County Health Department in 1975, establishing a general medical clinic, a Hospice



(L-R): Dr. Devlin, Mr. Smith, Dr. Levine, Mr. Bond, former State Health Director Dr. Hugh Tilson, Dr. Elizabeth Kanoff.

program, and a significant Home Health program. In 1987, Bond left public health for a period to work with his own construction company and as general manager of a health care and retirement community management firm.

Returning to public health in 1996, Bond was named director of the Buncombe County Health Center,

where he has built a distinguished record of achievement in public health capacity, policy development, effective partnership building, and advocacy for public health system improvements and reforms. Under his leadership, the Buncombe County Health Center was the first local health department to earn state accreditation, meeting all 41 accreditation standards.

Cont. on page 2

INSIDE TOP FEATURES

Dennis Streets, New DAAS Director, Page 3
VR 'All-Stars' and 'Superstars,' Page 6
CSE exceeds goals, Page 9

Braille Challenge

Page 5



Dorothea Dix Hospital's 150th Anniversary

Page 7



Levine Awards cont. from page 1

Among his accomplishments is the development of a managed-care program that maximizes Medicare funds; a nationally recognized program for the medically uninsured called Project Access that provides health care services through a partnership of public and private providers; countywide coalition of schools and health care providers called Alliance for Student Health that helps ensure that children get school-based health care; dental care programs including dental sealants for third-graders; and a nonprofit Public Health Foundation to secure grants and handle contributions for health initiative for the uninsured people in Buncombe County.

Bond received his undergraduate degree and master's degree in Public Health Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Bill Smith's public health career began in 1977. He was appointed Health Director for Robeson County Health Department in August 1988.

Smith is known for his successful efforts to strengthen public health through partnerships and collaboration. On the local level, Smith's accomplishments include the development of a model obstetrical care program incorporating private/public partnerships;

development and implementation of Robeson County Intensive Livestock Operation Rules; development of multi-county, public/private, immunization tracking system; the establishment of three primary care clinics; and the development of a Satellite Animal Shelter. Under his leadership, the Robeson County Health Department achieved Jail Health Service accreditation after only 20 months of operation and Home Health Services accreditation.

Smith received his undergraduate degree from the University of South Carolina and a Master of Public Health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. ■



Mark Your Calendars!

The 2006 State Agency Wellness Fair is just around the corner! Health screenings, medical tests, safety demonstrations and more than 100 vendors will be present. Don't miss out on this opportunity to Be Safe and Be Healthy. For more information contact Robin Hicks @ 799-9260.

May 23, 2006 / 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

James A. Graham Building / NC State Fairgrounds

Streets Named New Head of Aging and Adult Services

Dennis Streets is the new head of the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS). He began his appointment on March 1. Streets replaces long-time DAAS Director Karen Gottovi, who retired at the end of February.

“Dennis has been a chief architect in planning for the future of aging in North Carolina,” said Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom. “He has been a leader in preparing for the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation and in continuing to further the mission of the division to promote the independence and dignity of our seniors and disabled adults.”

In announcing the appointment, Hooker Odom noted about Streets, “He has been a tremendous asset to DHHS in his 10 years with the division.”

Streets has spent his career working in the field of aging and adult services. His experience at the division includes serving as the chief of the planning, budget and systems support section and serving as a human services planner.

“I very much appreciate this opportunity to help build upon the leadership of Karen in further strengthening services, supports, and opportunities for our state’s seniors, adults with disabilities, and their families,” Streets said. “We must continue to be good stewards of public funds and trust, work



Dennis Streets

effectively with our local service providers and many other partners, seek and respect the views of consumers and their advocates, and move forward initiatives to help assure that all citizens enjoy livable and senior-friendly communities that are also responsive and inclusive in providing needed long-term services and supports. Our goal is for North Carolina to remain a national leader in the field of aging and adult services.”

His other work experience includes government service with the Division of Social Services and the Triangle J Area Agency on Aging; time spent in the private sector as executive director of The Evergreens, Inc., a non-profit long-term care organization and as a professional relations representative with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina; and time spent as coordinator of Center for Aging Research and Educational Services at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work. He was co-editor of the book *The Field of Adult Services*, published in 1995.

Streets received his undergraduate degree from UNC-Chapel Hill and he holds Masters Degrees in Public Health and the Arts of Teaching, also from UNC-Chapel Hill. He is a licensed nursing home administrator.

He lives in Chatham County with his wife, Dawn, and their two sons, Clark and Matt. ■



Jalil Isa

iSalud y Saludos!

Are We in Spring Yet?

Are we in spring yet? That's right... Frosty the Snowman seemed to head to Siberia this year and left North Carolinians with little if any real cold and wintry weather to speak of. It's quite a marked contrast from previous years for me here. The first month I spent in North Carolina, back in January 2000, the Triangle area got soaked with the most amount of snow in a 24-hour period, ever – 20.5 inches! A couple of winters later, it got enough snow to put it on the record books again with one of the top ten greatest snow falls. And snow has just been one of the symptoms of the winter in past years. At other times, ice has been the culprit to the winter weather woes. Ice has proven to be a much bigger deal for residents than snow, in fact. As those of us who've been around for a few years can attest, the ice has made not only for impossible drives home... but has also been responsible for some deaths and countless cases of hospitalizations due to carbon monoxide poisonings as a result of inappropriate use of heating devices during power outages. Luckily, this year has brought none of the death and mayhem. We've been spared from the dark side of what might otherwise be considered the white season.

Having said that – at least for this Miami native – this winter just hasn't

been a true winter. I can't help but feel like I was cheated out of one of the experiences I deliberately seek during this time of the year. Not to mention, one of the factors that has seriously contributed to me developing such a taste for this lovely state: 4 seasons. In my case, I could almost do with just one season all year long – winter... especially if it's cold and cloudy the whole time. But then again, I'm a freak when it comes to my taste in weather. Either way, it seems like we just had 3 seasons during the past year; two-and-a-half if you take into account the semi-autumn we had, because let's face it...this was not an autumn for the record books. It was hot so late into the fall season that the leaves still thought it was summer. Then everything changed quite suddenly when a cold blast finally moved on through.

I make a point of stressing this recent weather pattern and how much it disturbs me because in many cases, Latinos who are recent arrivals to the state have never experienced the kind of climate that is more typical of this time of year. That is, they may never have experienced sub-freezing temperatures. In my case, I spent the first 15 years of my life without ever having seen a flake of snow; only once in that entire time did I experience near-freezing temperatures. A

couple of winters ago, temperatures in Miami, where I was born and raised, got cold enough that some ice formed on car windows (the sort of thing that is an almost daily occurrence for weeks in this state). It made the front page of the Miami Herald! That happened only once during the entire time I lived there. In some cases, the novelty is something to be appreciated. I know that many people – who've never lived in a place with winter temperatures that can make for frosty windows, icicles, and a white blanket of snow – are so intrigued by it that they can overlook the drawbacks for quite some time. Granted, like with most things, I'm sure the novelty wears off. But in my case, I'm still deeply entranced by the sight of changing colors that autumn brings, followed by the sight of everything covered in white. I tend to be a much bigger fan of cold weather than most people I know, so that may help augment my appreciation for this kind of climate. One day, I hope to spend some time living in Alaska to put my love of more northern weather to the ultimate test! In the meantime, I'll happily take my dose of cold weather in the Old North State. ■

Governor Morehead School holds Braille Challenge



In the spirit of continuing to promote excellence in Braille, the staff/students at the Governor Morehead School (GMS) held the Braille Challenge on February 16, 2006. For the past four years, the Braille Institute of America has held this unique reading and writing contest to celebrate excellence in Braille literacy skills. This is GMS's third year participating. Contestants in grades 1-12 participate in contests demonstrating proficiency in Braille reading and writing, comprehension, spelling, proofreading and tactile graphics.

This day consisted of fun educational activities, food, a poster contest, prizes, and a talent show. Guest speakers included GMS graduates John DeLuca and Johnna Simmons, who discussed the importance of Braille in their lives after graduation from the GMS.

Pictured at the Challenge and Talent Show are: Upper left - Cymone Alston, upper right - Shawanna Maxwell, Center - Daniel Gore and Troy Adams, Center right - Quameisha Sexton, Bottom Left - Jordan Lynch and Rod Poole, Orientation & Mobility instructor, lower left center - Kwenton Babatunde, lower right center - Antonio Franklin and Lisa Godwin, lower right - Robert Parrish (instructor), Troy Adams, Antonio Franklin and Daniel Gore

Vocational Rehab Honors 2005 'All-Stars' and 'Superstars'

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has honored staff members in Fayetteville, Greenville and Morehead City with its statewide "VR All-Star Award."

- For outstanding achievement in leadership, the agency honored **Nelda Creech**, a quality development specialist (now retired) in its Morehead City office. Creech was praised for her hands-on problem solving and compassionate concern for her clients. She was also cited for being at "the forefront of teaching, leading and inspiring her co-workers."
- The agency honored **Linda Vaughn**, an office assistant in its Fayetteville Independent Living office, for outstanding achievement in customer service. Vaughn was cited for her "positive, customer-oriented professionalism" that "leaves you feeling you are the most important person in the world."
- **Rick Dickerson**, a rehabilitation engineer in the agency's Greenville office, was honored for the creativity of his work. Dickerson was recognized for "jumping right in, analyzing his client's needs and not stopping until he has exhausted all options" and for "seeing old problems in new ways and new challenges with a fresh approach."

The three were chosen from recipients of the division's regional "Superstar Awards." They also include—

- Leadership: **Sandra Britt**, unit manager in the Lumberton office; **Mary Walls**, unit manager in the Albemarle office; and **Jo Perkins**, an assistant director in the agency's Raleigh administrative office.
- Customer Service: **Susan Adams**, a rehabilitation education specialist in the Raleigh administrative office; **Jimmette Graham**, a rehabilitation counselor in the Kinston office; and **Gloria Evans**, a rehabilitation counselor in the Statesville office.
- Creativity/Innovation: **Phil Protz**, a rehabilitation assistive technology specialist in the Raleigh administrative office; **Diane Renfrow**, a rehabilitation counselor in the Durham office; and **Nancy Rummage**, rehabilitation counselor in the Albemarle office.



The division provides counseling, training, education, medical, transportation and other services to persons with physical or mental disabilities to assist them in living independently or in becoming job-ready.

Last year, the agency assisted almost 9,000 North Carolinians in achieving employment and more than 2,000 in achieving their independent living goals. ■

Dorothea Dix Hospital's 150th Anniversary



When the doors of the state's first hospital for people with mental illness opened in 1856, the trip from Dorothea Dix's home in Massachusetts to Raleigh was measured in weeks. The world may have grown smaller but not our problems. On February 22, friends, staff, advocates, patients, former patients, state officials and host of well-wishers were on hand to celebrate the 150 anniversary of the opening of Dorothea Dix Hospital. Keynoting the event was former Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court Burley Mitchell Jr. Also on hand were many of the former directors and staff of the hospital. Over 350 guests and dignitaries crammed into the Employee Lounge and Grill for the celebration of 150 years of quality care for people with mental illness.

DHHS recognized for supporting National Guard and Reserve employees



The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services has been recognized by Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) for its outstanding support of DHHS North Carolina Guard and Reserve employees. At a special awards ceremony at Lowe's Motor Speedway on Jan. 28, DHHS Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom (center) received the "Above and Beyond" Award from General Dan K. McNeill, Commanding General, United States Army Forces Command, and North Carolina ESGR State Chairman Mr. Bud Brown (not pictured). On the left is Dr. Rick Mumford, now Senior Assistant for the State Health Director on Health Disparities and Workplace Development. Colonel Mumford served in Iraq with the U.S. Army National Guard 230th Support Battalion, 30th Infantry Brigade. On active duty from March 2004 to January 2005, Mumford served as a triage officer and Brigade Dental Surgeon for a field medical unit in Balad Ruz.

Funding renewed for Baby Love Plus

North Carolina's Eastern Baby Love Plus program in Women's and Children's Health, Division of Public Health, was recently re-funded. Aimed at eliminating perinatal health disparities, the initiative will receive \$750,000 per year over the next four years through the federal Division of Healthy Start and Perinatal Services, Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Originally funded in 1997, Eastern Baby Love Plus focuses on improving African-American birth outcomes in seven eastern counties: Bertie, Edgecombe, Greene, Martin, Pitt, Tyrrell and Washington. A regional consortium composed of community leaders, providers and consumers provides advice and guidance to the program.

The core components of Baby Love Plus include intensive outreach, prenatal case management, community and provider health education, depression screening and referral, and care of both the mother and child for two years after delivery. The program is implemented through local health departments, community-based organizations and university efforts.

Eastern Baby Love Plus is part of the N.C. Baby Love Plus program, which also includes Northeastern Baby Love Plus (Gates, Halifax, Hertford, Nash and



Medical Assistance Program

Northampton counties) and Triad Baby Love Plus (Forsyth and Guilford counties). North Carolina's fourth Healthy Start initiative, covering Robeson, Hoke and Scotland counties, is housed at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. ■

Child Support Enforcement exceeds goals

North Carolina Child Support Enforcement continues to outperform incentive goals set by the federal government as it moves forward with year two of a five-year plan to improve customer service.

“We want to deliver unsurpassed service to more than a half-million children,” said Barry Miller, North Carolina CSE section chief. “This ‘Journey to Excellence’ plan is being implemented statewide by all child support personnel, and it is working. We customized our plan to exceed federal goals.”

Recent data shows CSE is on target for reaching incentive goals in collections, paternity establishment and in the percentage of cases under order.

Collections goal for 2005 was 65.01 percent. Current data indicates collections are at 64.96 percent and climbing at mid-fiscal year. Gross collections for fiscal year 2005 were \$597,056,045.00, an all-time high reflecting a 12-percent increase over the past two years. The goal in 2005

for percentage of cases under order was 79.52. The current performance is 81 percent. Paternity establishment’s goal for 2005 was 86.65. Current midyear status is 89.46 percent.

Today, North Carolina has 297 certified DNA agents in 57 offices to collect DNA samples when paternity is questioned by an alleged father. This has improved the turnaround time from sampling to receipt of test results from 15 days to 9 days, a 66-percent improvement. Health coverage will soon become a mandated incentive item, and CSE is making preparations to offer affordable private health insurance to qualified children through group plans.

Child Support Enforcement joined the North Carolina Awards for Excellence program sponsored by the Legislature and housed at North Carolina State University. This is a model of business management that uses criteria of the Malcolm Baldrige Quest for Excellence program. The criteria are based on core values that are embedded beliefs and behaviors found in high-performing organiza-

tions. Those values are: focus on the future, visionary leadership, customer-driven excellence, organizational and personal leaning, valuing employees, management by fact, and excellence.

“We believe that by implementing the Baldrige business model into every aspect of the child support organization, we will be successful in achieving the goals on our journey,” Miller said.

In October 2004 Child Support Enforcement received the North Carolina Award for Excellence for executing the Baldrige criteria into our program. Child Support Enforcement continues its pursuit of performance excellence and its commitment to achieve unprecedented levels of customer service for the children and families of North Carolina.

“In the first two years we have made great strides,” Miller said. “North Carolina is committed to consistently collect as much money as possible for the children and families of North Carolina.” ■